

MERCURY BAY CO-OPERATING PARISH

St Andrew's Community Church Newsletter

April - May 2022

Our Mission in this Parish is to bring the saving love of Christ to all whom we meet, and lovingly encourage them to follow Him.

EASTER SERVICES

GOOD FRIDAY April 15th 9:30 service

Dorothy Preece

EASTER SUNDAY April 17th 9:30 service

Easter Communion and live music

Pastor Stewart Hanna

FOR
GOD
SO
LOVED THE WORLD
HE
GAVE
HIS
ONLY
SON

Our people and their stories: David and Christine Christie



David and Christine moved to Whitianga and joined our Fellowship 18 months ago. Their combined stories make an exciting read! They were both brought up in Wellington, but didn't meet until many years later.

David was brought up in Petone. His parents attended St David's Presbyterian and he was baptised there. "We kids didn't like the Minister – he made sure we went to church when Sunday School came out, so we vaulted the fence." David says his father 'had Salvation

Army leanings' and his brother was a strong Baptist. Christine grew up in Silverstream, and was baptised at St Mary's Anglican Church. She was in all the Nativity plays. She was the only daughter out of five children. "As a family we got out and did things together. One Sunday evening when I was 10, we went to an outside gathering in Naenae, and I gave my heart to Jesus. From that day, I knew the Lord was working in my life." Christine went to Heretaunga College and later trained at Karori to be a Kindergarten teacher. David completed an apprenticeship as a plumber but instead he

went into the roofing business with his brother. They won some big commercial contracts and their business did very well. When they sold the business David could afford to buy a round-the-world ticket and went away travelling for eight months. "I went to many third-world countries, and was often disillusioned by the wealth of the churches and the poverty of the people. I have a strong faith in God – but not so much in the church." A few times during his life, David has experienced God's real presence. "Once, when I was very low, I felt a hand on my shoulder, and I knew it was the hand of God, reassuring me. Another time, my brother was due to sail a big yacht back from Tonga. The self-steering was broken, and I flew in to help crew the yacht. Just before we sailed I had a drink of water from a hose on the wharf and I got a stomach bug. The seas were very rough, and I was really ill. I prayed – 'Lord let this be over soon.' Then I saw an ancient scroll, with our voyage from Tonga to NZ mapped out on it, and I knew God was looking after us."

For her big O.E. Christine went to Israel to live in a Kibbutz. She was interested in their way of child-rearing, as part of her kindergarten training. "One day, sitting outside the kitchen on the kibbutz, I met the Israeli Minister of Education. He asked me to spell 'vegetables' for him. Later, she hitch-hiked on her own through America. "I didn't tell my parents I was hitching, until I'd done it." Christine got into some sticky situations, but she was always aware that God was with her. "We were a team, me and God," she says.

David was flatting in England when a friend asked him, as a favour, to pick up a Kiwi girl from Heathrow airport. David didn't know the girl – her name was Christine. She joined David and his mates in the flat, and it wasn't long before he proposed. "I don't think so," she said, "I don't know you well enough." They both loved skiing, and David told Christine he had just come back from a beautiful valley near Turin, Italy, but the snow was disappearing. Christine decided to visit the place, and found new snow. She rang David to tell him the snow had come back. "I was on the first plane out," David says. When they got back from skiing, Christine said, "You know when you asked me.... Well, I think it will be alright now."

David was quite a lot older than Christine, but it worked out just fine. They were married at Christine's home church, St Mary's Anglican in Silverstream. Their first daughter, Holly was born in Wellington, and then they moved to a citrus orchard in Bethlehem and had a second daughter,

Anna. David had quite a bit of experience with buying properties, and he knew that the area would soon be suitable for subdivision. They added a kiwifruit packhouse and added more land to the property before David's planning paid off, and they were able to subdivide and develop the land. Christine worked at Bethlehem College, where she helped to set up a kindergarten. She underwent an operation and needed healing. A Minister laid his hands on her and Christine fell into a swoon. "I was slain in the Spirit and I felt wonderfully peaceful. There have been many times in my life when I have known for sure that God is in control. I don't need to study the Bible in depth to know that." The Christies were part of St Peters Presbyterian congregation in Tauranga for over 30 years. Their minister Keith Hooker and his wife Frances became good friends.

David and Christine continued their love of skiing and boating with the girls. They built a house at Te Puna where the girls could have their horses, and later another new house on a very steep slope overlooking Waikareao estuary. Then a skiing accident changed their lives. David hit a rock and suffered multiple broken bones to his right side, as well as a head injury. From then on he began to experience severe vertigo attacks, and Christine became David's guardian. "One time I woke up and was so disoriented I thought the house had slipped down the slope," David says.

"Sometimes I had near misses in the car because of the vertigo. My friend, Pastor Jim Butler was my saviour. I phoned him to come and rescue me on several occasions." These days, I mostly ride a pushbike." David's hearing is affected, and he can't tolerate loud noises.

Years ago the family sailed to Whitianga and stayed on the boat in the marina. They loved the place, so when it came time to retire to a quiet life, they chose to come to Whitianga. They bought push-bikes and a boat, but they have yet to find out where the fish are hiding! David and Christine joined the Fellowship immediately, and we received them with open arms. Christine is now working in the Op-shop, and her outgoing personality serves her natural talent for pastoral care. David appreciates the plain honesty of our little kauri church. With his wealth of knowledge of building construction and architectural planning, he hopes to be able to help with practical tasks as well as future planning. He is very interested in the concept of providing low-cost housing.

Thank you David and Christine, for sharing your inspirational stories.

A Disciplined Way to Read the Bible

One of the first scholars in Christian Antiquity was the Egyptian Origenes Adamantius (185-254 AD) popularly known as 'Origen'.



He gave us a way of reading the Bible that has been passed down through the centuries to Ministers and Bible students.

The *Lectio Divina* method has four parts:

Lectio (reading) - Read the passage of Scripture slowly, more than once. If a particular word or sentence seems significant, even if you don't know why, you may want to write it down.

Meditatio (reflection) - Let the significant words fill your mind without straining to analyse them. You are in God's presence. Let the Holy Spirit lead your understanding.

Oratio (prayer) - Allow your heart to speak to God, in words inspired by the Scripture, or by your reflection on it.

Contemplatio (rest) - Let go of ideas and words. Allow yourself to rest in the presence of God in simple and wordless contemplation.

There are free copies of 'Word for Today' Bible reading notes, on the church table.

Also – copies of the Bible Society devotional publication for Holy Week - 'Woven'. Please take them.

For donations to the Church and Parish:

Mercury Bay Co-operating Parish

BNZ Whitianga

02 0496 0062562 00



For donations to the Monday Meals:

Mercury Bay Community Support Trust

Westpac Whitianga

03 1578 0108901 00

Thank you for your support!



The real meaning of 'freedom'

I recently had a brush with a Covid contact, so have been hibernating for seven days.

This virus has disrupted so many lives in the last couple of years, and it has made us all aware of the many meanings of the word 'freedom'. Bishop Paul Reeves, known personally to many on the Peninsula, famously said, *"God gives us freedom. Freedom involves choices. Choices involve consequences. Consequences involve accountability."*



In protesting, or 'protecting' their personal freedoms, a small minority of people have been the centre of attention, causing many others to call for them to be held accountable for their actions. Jesus taught us to be accountable to God, to work for the greater good, rather than acting on our own selfish wishes.

With the easing of restrictions, we can thankfully forget vaccine passes, but in the (hopefully) short term the need to discipline ourselves to wear masks at all times becomes even more critical.

Richard Jones' *Worship for Today* includes this:

God, freedom to grow is your gift.
For the challenge of freedom, equip us.
In the decisions of freedom, direct us.
In the art of freedom, discipline us.
In the dangers of freedom, protect us.
In the raptures of freedom, steady us.
In the life of freedom, give us joy.
In the use of freedom, give us wisdom, and the long view.
We are always free to love our neighbour.
We are always free to love God.

Op-Shop Update

Everything has changed at St Andrew's Op-shop!

You are invited and encouraged to come and see the new-look layout.

In January 'new' shop fittings were generously donated to us from a shop that closed down. A team of men (mostly husbands volunteered by their wives!) unloaded it all and rebuilt the fittings in the shop. The result is impressive, and the ladies' room, which always felt cluttered and claustrophobic, now feels light and airy. You may have read in *The Informer* that we were given \$100 for a staff morning tea. We decided to spend the money on wine and chocolates for those hard-working men! Other things have changed too. All the bed linen which used to be displayed inside the front door (again, claustrophobic), is now housed behind the men's room in a newly arranged linen and crafts room. Everything from a sewing needle to a duvet cover is now beautifully arranged there.

We now have two new committee members: Annie Lynch as Treasurer, and Jackie Courtenay as our Independent Chairperson. Jackie is a Catholic member, and our shop volunteers represent several other churches.

And the BIG news is – winter clothing is now on the racks, prices beginning at \$4 per item. Thanks to all the team who helped in the mammoth job of changing the stock! With Covid restrictions easing, the shop is now open on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, 9am - 1:00 pm.

Our Op-shop donates \$2,000 per month to St Andrew's, plus \$600 in rent. Other local churches receive \$200 per month. We have kept up all of these regular payments while open for only two days, but the bank balance has been diminishing. We are keen to rebuild the work for community and churches. *Thank you all, for your generous support with good quality, clean clothing.*

Madeleine.



St Andrew's Worship Schedule

Sincere thanks to all our visiting preachers and clergy

April	3rd	Dorothy Preece (No Communion today)
	10th	Favourite Hymns service
	15th	GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE 9:30am - Dorothy Preece
	17th	EASTER SUNDAY COMMUNION - Stewart Hanna
	24th	Dorothy Preece
May	1st	Rev Shirley Barker-Kirby (Communion)
	8th	Julie St George & Ladies' Bible Team
	15th	Ross Millar
	22th	John Ormsby
	29th	Dorothy Preece



Inspirations

From Annie, at Bible Study:

“If anyone should understand me, it is those in the Church. They understand the spiritual me – same goals, same hopes, same Jesus, same Love, same heaven.”

From Pastor Joy Hanna:

“God does not always give us exactly what we want, but He will always give us exactly what we need.”

From Rev Shirley Barker-Kirby:

“Humankind was never going to be able to get back to God by our own efforts. That’s why God had to do it for us. That’s why Jesus went to the cross.”

From Rev Viv Coleman:

“Grant us again that surprising joy,
the assurance that all that is lost will be found,
that grief will be upended,
that spaces hollowed by sorrow will become repositories of eternal glory,
that all things will one day be revealed
as mysteries of your mercy and grace.”

(Douglas McKelvey)

Parish and Community Information

Many groups are in recess pending the easing of Covid restrictions. Please make contact with organisers to confirm details.

- Monday **Upright & Active** 9am weekly exercise for active seniors
 Contact Carol 867 1097
 Community meals takeaway only, every Monday 3:30-5pm
 Contact Maureen 027 246 6164
- Tuesday **Sit and be Fit** 10am weekly for the less active
 Contact Viv 869 5295
 Stitch n' Chat fortnightly 1:30-4pm in the Hamilton Room
 Contact Julie 021 169 1637
- Wednesday **Ladies' Bible Study** 10am weekly
 Contact Julie 021 169 1637
 Inter-Church Women's Fellowship Monthly.
 Contact Annie 866 3711
 Scrapbags quilting group 10am weekly.
 Contact Robin 866 5029
 Parkinsons Support 6-weekly.
 For dates and times contact Keith 027 459 8683
- Thursday **Enliven** (Presbyterian Support for the Elderly) weekly
 Contact Jenny 866 0556
- Friday **Cancer Support Coffee Morning** First Friday of each month.
 Contact Ruth 021 363 840
 AA Driver Licensing Second Friday of each month.
 (8 April, 13 May) No bookings allowed.

Note that Dorothy Preece, Parish Secretary, has changed her phone number. Please now use 022 132 2061 when making contact.

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St Andrew's By the Sea Community Church

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